1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

535 right hand to make certain movements with the fingers similar to snapping. The accompanying pictures, show something of the nature 535 of the movements described.[1] The singing, which on this particular occasion was at the time of the *gauna*, was said to be *gali* or abuse. 533 The women frequently started a song and sang two or three lines of the same, while the men remained silent except for their instruments. Then the men would answer in two or three lines and the women remain silent, though frequently making movements with the hands, or turning. Finally they all sang together. The men would frequently stop all of a sudden while a woman sang a solo which sometimes came from one and sometimes from the other dancer.

532 ART AND WORKMANSHIP. Our study of the Kols was disappointing in the results it yielded in the field of art, for we found practically no evidence of Kol art. Nothing which they make or draw or paint seems to be characteristic of them alone, and there is little they do in imitation. They do not ordinarily decorate their houses differently from their Hindu neighbours. Occasionally the doorways have a picture representing a peacock, as indicated on plate XX. The peacock motif was also found on the urns where wheat was stored. [825] Certain non-Kol houses, however, sometimes had the same symbol. There is apparently no taboo connected with the peacock, and the work was said to be entirely decorative. At the *holi* season the walls of the house which face the courtyard are frequently decorated with various figures. Plate XXI gives an idea of how this is done, and the drawing on the wall contains representations of tigers, [562] peacocks, birds, sunflowers, men, flowers in a pot, and a house. It was said that women and boys do this work, never the men.

463 Kols seem to be deficient in handiworks of any sort. They 285 never make baskets, wooden dishes, *dholaks*, beads nor ornaments; 301 they do no sewing, nor making of clothes nor embroidery work. The 322 mattress makers, the Kathariyas, come the nearest to having a handi- 294 craft, but it is not generally practised even by them. Most Kols will 296 mend clothes, if necessary, and this is mostly done by the men. There is the usual great need for handicrafts so sadly undeveloped in rural 283 India. Occasionally they make their own beds and cots, and rope 312 for them is obtained from the stalks of rice called *bagai*. Such ropes are also used for drawing water from the well. Sometimes they 324 fashion their own grinding mills from flattish stones by a chipping process. The children have no toys with which to play and none are 524 constructed for them by their parents. Boys sometimes make a very 857 inferior type of bow and arrow with which to hunt birds.

1 See plate XIX.

l:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

there are but three literate Kols in the Central India Agency[1]. It is a well known fact that the illiteracy of the lower groups is a source of much hardship to them as it leads to frauds of various kinds at their expense.

In respect of literacy the Kols do not compare favourably with other tribes and castes. The number of literates per thousand works out, in the case of Kol males, to just under five. For the Kayasths it is 607, the Brahmins 437, Oraons 35, Doms 16, Bhils 11 and Chamars 10. This figure of five in the case of the Kol is also lower, according to the report, than the figure of the Munda groups in Bihar and Orissa returned by the Census of 1931[2].

In the Central Provinces' Report a special subsidiary table of literacy of castes is given both for 1921 and 1931[3]. The average literacy for Central Provinces was 51 per mille in 1931 : 93 per mille in the case of the males and 9 in the case of the females. The respective figures for 1921 were 42, 76 and 7, which would indicate some advances. On this table the Kols as a whole have a literacy of 4 per mille : for the males it is 7 and for the females nil. In 1921 the respective figures were 2 and 4. Taking all the groups listed, and there are seventy tribes and castes selected, there are only three who rank in literacy below the Kols of the Central Provinces : Wadder and Bhil with 3 each and Korku with 2, while two other tribes, Bharias and non-Christian Oraons, rank the same as the Kols with 4 per mille. The Kol thus ranks among the most illiterate groups of the provinces.

OCCUPATIONS OF THE KOLS. Census reports of the Central Provinces have interesting discussions of occupations. The report for 1931 shows that in the province as a whole 776 persons per 1,000 workers were engaged in the exploitation of animals and vegetables. Industry comes second with only 92 per 1,000. In the lists of occupations of selected groups we find the following of the Kol tribe :

Kol Tribe	Number per 1,000 earners engaged in each occupation
Agriculturalists ..	160
Field labourers, wood-cutters, etc.	560
Raisers of livestock, milkmen, herdsmen ..	17

1 *Ibid.* XX : 2, literacy tables.
2 *Ibid.* I : I, p. 342.
3 *Ibid.* XII : I, p. 290.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

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Kol Tribe	Number per 1,000 earners engaged in each occupation
Artisans and other workers ..	22
Labourers, boatmen, cartmen, *pulki* bearers, etc. ..	19
Trade ..	12
Domestic service ..	11
Contractors, clerks, cashiers, etc. otherwise unspecified ..	17
Labourers, unspecified ..	157
Other occupations ..	27[1]

463 177 Our own investigations show that the Kols enter into the modern economic world more easily than other primitive tribes such as the Gonds. While there are scores of Gond villages in and around Jubbulpore, the Gonds are shy and retiring and are only seen in the town on bazaar days when they come to buy and exchange some of [156] their forest produce. The Kols are not bad mixers, seem to like company, and have entered into the industrial life of the city quite readily. We did not find the Kols limited to any particular occupation. 463 They are unusually good workers and wherever we went we found this fact mentioned about them. We found a few who are farmers [427] and who hold small pieces of land from the *malguzar*. Others are farm workers and follow the crops; and during the time of the wheat harvest some Kol villages and *mahullas* are almost entirely deserted. Many of the Kols living in a town not far from Jubbulpore are road-workers, breaking the stone for the roadway and doing the required [439] labour in repairing it. Others in Barela burn and sell charcoal; some Kols buy wood from the Gonds, cut it into convenient lengths and resell it in Jubbulpore. In Kharara Ghat, a purely Kol village about eight miles from Jubbulpore and quite inaccessible and isolated, the [427] Kols seem independent, raising all their own food-stuffs and paying their *malguzari* rents by means of the proceeds from the sale of wood [276 824] and of the leaves of the *tendu* plants (*Diospyros embryopteris, melanoxylon, montana, etc.*), used in the manufacture of country cigarettes or *biris*. No one in this village was said to be engaged in hard labour [461] for others, known as coolie work. In other places we found indication that they can quite readily turn their hands to mechanical work. A few are so engaged in the factories in Jubbulpore. We watched Kols

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 288.

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE IX.

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Kols Buying wood from Gonds for resale in Jubbulpore.

[133]
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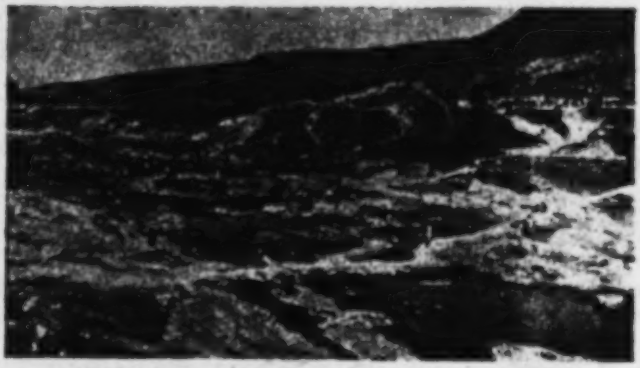

A Cement Pit in the Kaimers. Most of the Labourers are Kols.

Kols passing up Limestone to be Burnt in the Kilns.

[facing p. 264]

Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

prepare tiles in a workshop near Deori; a Barela Kol has taken up the work of a mason and bricklayer. In another family we found that members had been jungle postal-runners for three generations. In Sihora they said that their chief occupation was digging in the fields, though they also cut wood and sold grass; only one or two rented lands. At Katni we found that they were chiefly employed in the cement works, but would soon be going elsewhere, as the cement factories were in the process of closing down. In some of the villages about Katni they were found to be mostly labourers in the surrounding fields. At Kymore thousands are employed in the great cement factories; at Maihar they are mostly engaged in lime-kiln work. Near Rewa City they seem to be mostly serfs and labourers. Further north they grind sandstone for the glass works, and at Chunar in the United Provinces help to dig the rock out of the hillsides. We found a few literate Kols in Katni who had learned to read in the Church Mission School. One of these was a clerk in a warehouse at busy times of the year; the rest of the year he would do whatever he could find which often was nothing but coolie work.

THE SITUATION IN THE VILLAGES: *Land and Income.* In our visits to numerous villages we made enquiries as to the economic situation on the part of the Kols living there. A careful survey was made near Jubbulpore. Text figure 30 shows the area. Only a few Kols in the large group at Barela actually rent lands for farming purposes; either on shares or on straight rent. In Kharara Ghat the situation seems to be the opposite, for nearly every household there holds land from the *malguzar*. Money is earned on the side from the sale of wood, grass and *tendu* leaves for *biris*. In Barela a survey of thirty-nine families indicated that only three held lands, and that the total acreage so held was but 5¼ acres. Thirty families in Kharara Ghat hold 82 acres of land; in some cases taxes for the same are paid direct to the Government, while to the *malguzar* they say they pay Rs. 10 per *khandi* of wheat sown, this being considered as 1/3 the produce of the land.

Barela Kols do most of the coolie work on the roads near that place and also labour on the farms as occasion offers. All the able members of the family work and we found that on the average the family income was Rs. ten to twelve per month for this type of labour One dealer in charcoal said that he cleared locally in Barela about Rs. 120 per year. Another Barela Kol has the custom of purchasing wood from the Gonds who bring it down from the hills near-by. This is bought for five pice, is then cut up into shorter lengths by himself

34 [text continues on middle of p. 266]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

PLATE X.

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[415]

Kols Threshing and Winnowing their Wheat near Barela

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Tendu leaves gathered by Kols for Biri manufacture. The two men on the right are Mohammedan leaf Brokers. Khorsra Ghat Village.

[FACING p. 265]

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

members of the family able to work they leave their rude huts and then return three or four months later with a bit of money with which to buy clothes and the like. Some of the women accompany them, though not the children, and when they return at the end of the season there are a large number of infants which have been born to them in the fields as they have worked. 178 221 464

There are three strata among the Kols of today. From the economic view the factory coolies are better off. While wages are not high they are higher than can be won in agricultural or forest work and the income is steady. As forest people and agricultural serfs they may have enough to eat, but no money for anything else. Factory work brings three to four times the wage of the Kol who works away in the villages, and lasts the year round. Everywhere it is said that the Kols are the best group of workmen among those employed and often they are the main workers throughout a factory where unskilled labour is needed. As they are working in the factories they are also learning trades, and fifty years from now it may be found that Kols have taken up many trades and have made good. There is no occupational restriction as with many Hindu castes. 178 434 464 [463]

As the economic level is raised there is usually found a definite improvement in living conditions. Bad as the factory lines are they are much better than the rude huts of the jungle Kols. A Kol in Katni has built for himself a brick house of a very respectable appearance. In order to supplement their farm earnings the agricultural Kols still practise on the side their primitive occupations of wood and grass cutting. The industrial Kols are not able to do this, for they must work daily in the factory unless it happens to be closed on Sunday. On that day it will be found that a few Kols have gone out where wood may be cut and each brings back a load to the factory lines. This is cut for their own use and is not for sale. 178 511 [313]

Wherever Kols have been settled for some years they have told us how they first came and lived in grass huts and how gradually, as they became sure of their place there and as work became fairly regular and certain, that they have put up better living quarters and finally have built good mud houses with tiled roofs. More is owned by them than they ever had before. They possess livestock and there may be considerable amounts invested in jewellery. [231 454]

Judging from the pictures in books like Crooke, Russell and Hiralal and Roy's work on the Mundas and other related tribes, the Kols of today in Central India cover their persons with clothes much more completely than the earlier pictures represent. Today one finds but little exposure of the breasts by Kol women, and in the 178 291